

REMARKS

Claims 34-48 are pending in this application, with claims 1-33 having been cancelled and claims 34-48 being new. Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the preceding amendments and following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-7, 9-19, and 21-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the O’Sullivan article contained in the “*Update...*” news letter (“O’Sullivan”), in view of US Patent 5,414,809 to Hogan et al. (“Hogan”). Initially, Applicants note that claims 1-33 have been cancelled, rendering the rejections to those claims moot. Because new claims 34-48 may recite subject matter similar to that of cancelled claims 1-33, Applicants offer the following comments in an effort to expedite prosecution.

The Examiner states that O’Sullivan teaches sorting, filtering, and moving fuel assemblies based on one or more fuel attributes, specifically, fuel symmetry. Applicants respectfully submit that new independent claims 34 and 42 recites a method including “graphically *populating* . . . a graphical loading map” via tools configured to “sort, filter, or move the graphical fuel bundles *into the graphical loading map* based on *one or more fuel attributes* of the fuel bundles represented by the graphical fuel bundles.” O’Sullivan teaches populating with only a “drop and drag” tool that does not account for fuel attributes. O’Sullivan does disclose some tools that account for fuel attributes, but these tools simply move fuel assemblies *within* the graphical loading map based on attributes, not *into* the graphical loading map based on attributes, as recited by the claims. Compare O’Sullivan, p.1, ¶ 4 (discussing

intra-core movement based on symmetry attributes) *with* O’Sullivan, p.2, ¶ 1 (discussing core population by simple “drag and drop”).

Applicants further submit that Hogan does not cure the disclosure and suggestion deficiencies discussed above in O’Sullivan. Specifically, Hogan is silent with regard to fuel attributes and populating with tools based thereon. Because O’Sullivan, alone or in combination with Hogan, does not teach or fairly suggest each and every element of new claims 34 and 42, the applied references cannot anticipate or render obvious claims 34 and 42. Dependent claims 35-41 and 43-48 are allowable at least for depending from valid base claims. Applicants further submit that dependent claims 41 and 48 are further allowable for listing fuel attributes not disclosed or suggested in either O’Sullivan or Hogan. Allowance of the newly-added claims is respectfully requested.

Entry of Amendment Requested

Applicants respectfully request entry of this amendment by the Examiner since it raises no new issues and does not require any further consideration or search by the Examiner. The new claims present previously-considered material in a clearer format in accordance with Examiner’s request for clarification. Further, Applicants submit that, at the least, the amendment should be entered since it reduces the number of formal issues to place the application in better form for appeal.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks and amendments, the Applicants respectfully submit that each of the pending objections and rejections has been addressed and overcome, placing the present application in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

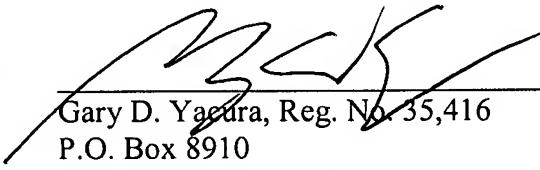
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Gary D. Yacura, Reg. No. 35,416, at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, DICKEY, & PIERCE, P.L.C.

By



Gary D. Yacura, Reg. No. 35,416
P.O. Box 8910
Reston, Virginia 20195
(703) 668-8000

GDY/REA:bmd

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